Regulation of poppy production

801. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that huge quantity of opium poppy is illegally produced and marketed in Malwa district of Madhya Pradesh causing huge loss to exchequer;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to regulate and account for production of poppy for proper taxation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) No Sir.

(c) In India, poppy cultivation is undertaken by the licensed cultivators, under the supervision of the Central Bureau of Narcotics, in the tracts notified by the Central Government in the three States of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. The entire produce of opium is collected under proper record from the cultivators during the weighment operations and the collected opium is dispatched in sealed containers to Government Opium and Alkaloid Works, Neemuch and Ghazipur for analysis. The price of opium to the cultivators is paid as per rates fixed by the Government of India and the Purchase Tax on opium received from the cultivators is paid to the concerned States at the rates prescribed by them. The records relating to the price paid to the cultivators and the amount paid as purchase tax on opium are maintained in the Central Bureau of Narcotics and its Divisional office.

Mobile banks in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh

802. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to provide banking facilities in rural, backwards, snowbound and far-flung areas of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh through mobile banks; and

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating areas to be covered in these States under the above project?